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EXAMINER
DENNISON, JERRY B

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2143	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	09/771,133	DEBBER ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	J. Bret Dennison	2143	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>26 January 2001</u>.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.   2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) <u>1-41</u> is/are pending in the application.
    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) <u>1-41</u> is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on <u>26 January 2001</u> is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
    a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
      1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
      2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
      3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1.   This Action is in response to Application Number 09/771133 received on 26 January 2001.

2.   Claims 1-41 are presented for examination.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 2, 16, 32, 39, 40, and 41 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Cheng (U.S. Patent Number 6,067,548).

3.   Regarding claims 1, 16, 32, 39, 40, and 41, Cheng discloses a computer-implemented method for managing tasks, the method comprising steps of:

accessing a first server from a client (Cheng, col. 18, lines 18-20);

retrieving by the first server status information associated with tasks stored on a database for display to the client (Cheng, col. 18, lines 20-35, Cheng teaches retrieving and displaying task information from the database);

receiving an instruction for managing the tasks (Cheng, col. 18, lines 30-35, Cheng teaches authenticated users being able to manage tasks),

responsive to the instruction received, generating updates to the status

information (Cheng, col. 18, lines 33-35, Cheng teaches updating the task information);

and

> providing the status information as updated for display at the client (Cheng, col.

18, lines 33-34, Cheng teaches project and task management screens).

4.   Regarding claim 2, Cheng discloses the limitations, substantially as claimed, as

described in claim 1, including the step of encapsulating functions associated with the

tasks as programmable objects (Cheng, col. 18, line 34-36, Cheng teaches task

objects).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the
> invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
> Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 3-9, 11-15, 17-21, 24-30, and 33-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

as being unpatentable over Cheng (U.S. Patent Number 6,067,548) in view of Hayashi

(U.S. Patent Number 6,026,365).

5.   Regarding claim 3, Cheng discloses the limitations, substantially as claimed, as

described in claim 1. Cheng also discloses each object having attributes (Cheng, col. 4,

lines 5-20). However, Cheng does not disclose wherein the tasks comprise a plurality

of attributes selected from a group comprising a description, a completion date, a

priority indicator, a duration indicator, an originator, and an assignee. In an analogous art of networking, Hayashi discloses a workflow support system that stores task information including a description, start/completion/deadline, and assignee (Hayashi, col. 5, lines 60-67). Therefore it would have been obvious to one in the ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine Cheng with Hayashi to provide a dynamic workflow support system that allows the user to refer to and to trace the history and progress state of control information for each task (Hayashi, see Abstract).

6.   Regarding claim 4, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 3, including wherein the step of generating updates to the status information comprises tracking a completion date associated with at least one of the tasks (Hayashi, col. 6, lines 10-20). Cheng and Hayashi do not explicitly state determining a failure to complete the at least one task by the completion date corresponding thereto and providing notification of the failure. However, it would have been obvious to one in the ordinary skill in the art to provide notification of failure of completion of the tasks since the user interface of Hayashi displays the current status of each task (Hayashi, Fig. 6). See motivation for claim 3.

7.   Regarding claim 5, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 4, including wherein providing notification comprises the sub-steps of:

        determining an assignee having responsibility for completing the task for which

failure was determined (Hayashi, Fig. 6); and

forwarding a notification to a manager associated with the assignee (Hayashi, Fig. 6). See motivation for claim 3.

8.   Regarding claim 6, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 3, including the steps of:

determining whether a user instruction is associated with an authorized user (Hayashi, col. 4, lines 30-55, Hayashi teaches a private environment wherein the system is not opened to the network, which implies that users are authorized before using the system. Hayashi also teaches a shared environment the shared database is controlled by the group members); and

responsive to a determination that the user instruction is associated with an authorized user, modifying the status information based on the user instruction (Hayashi, col. 5, line 60 through col. 6, line 22, Hayashi teaches when a user signs in to use the system, the status information is set). See motivation for claim 3.

9.   Regarding claim 7, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 1, including modifying the status information based on the user instruction and storing modified status information in the database (Hayashi, col. 5, line 60 through col. 6, line 22, Hayashi teaches when a user signs in to use the system, the status information is set). See motivation for claim 3.

10.   Regarding claim 8, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 7, including wherein the step of modifying the

status information comprises the sub-steps of:

        determining a class associated with a group of tasks (Hayashi, Fig. 6 and col. 4,

lines 30-55, Hayashi teaches a shared environment wherein members of a group have

separate tasks);

        verifying that the class includes a parameter enabling modification of the status

information (Hayashi, Fig. 6, Hayashi teaches a status field); and

        responsive to verification that the class includes a parameter enabling

modification, modifying the status information in accordance with the parameter

(Hayashi, Fig. 6, Hayashi teaches a status field, When the status of the task changes,

the field is modified). See motivation for claim 3.

11.   Regarding claim 9, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 8, including wherein the class is selected from a group

comprising users, managers, and administrators (Hayashi, Fig. 6 and col. 4, lines 30-55,

Hayashi teaches a shared environment wherein members of a group have separate

tasks). See motivation for claim 3.

12.   Regarding claim 11, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 9, including the step of assigning tasks to a selected user

(Hayashi, col. 6, lines 1-5, Hayashi teaches setting the 'person-in-charge' field, who is in charge of the task). See motivation for claim 3.

13.   Regarding claim 12, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 9, including wherein the status information indicates to the users the tasks to be completed (Hayashi, Fig. 6 and col. 6, lines 17-21). See motivation for claim 3.

14.   Regarding claim 13, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 9, including wherein the status information indicates to the managers the tasks that are overdue (col. 6, lines 17-21). See motivation for claim 3.

15.   Regarding claim 14, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 1, including wherein the user instruction is selected from a group comprising an update to a task, and creation of a new task (Hayashi, col. 5, lines 60 through col. 6, line 21).

16.   Regarding claim 15, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 1, including:

maintaining a representation of the status information on the first server (Fig. 6);

modifying the status information with the updates (Cheng, col. 18, lines 18-35);

and

storing the modified status information to the database (Cheng, col. 18, lines 18-

35).

17.   Regarding claim 17, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 16, including transferring the combined

presentation to a client computer for display (Hayashi, col. 4, lines 5-35).

18.   Regarding claim 18, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 16, including storing the status information

modified by the updated information on the database (Cheng, col. 18, lines 8-35).

19.   Regarding claim 19, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 17, including wherein the status information comprises a

plurality of tasks and a plurality of anomalies (Cheng, col. 18, lines 8-35).

20.   Regarding claim 20, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 19, including:

assigning a completion date to a first one of the tasks (Hayashi, col. 6, lines 15-

20);

determining whether the first one of the tasks was completed by the completion

date (Hayashi, col. 6, lines 15-20);

indicating that the first one of the tasks is an incomplete task if it is determined that the first one of the tasks was not completed by the completion date (Hayashi, col. 6, lines 15-20 and Fig. 6, Hayashi teaches a status field that indicates the status of the task); and

providing notification of the incomplete task to an additional account for initiating follow up (Hayashi, col. 6, lines 15-20 and Fig. 6, Hayashi teaches a status field that indicates the status of the task to any users on the system).

21.   Regarding claim 21, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 20, including wherein the step of providing notification of the incomplete

task comprises the sub-steps of:

determining a user associated with the account having responsibility for completing the incomplete task ((Hayashi, col. 6, lines 1-5, Hayashi teaches setting the 'person-in-charge' field, who is in charge of the task); and

transmitting the notification to the additional account assigned to a manager associated with the user (Hayashi, col. 6, lines 15-20 and Fig. 6, Hayashi teaches a status field that indicates the status of the task to any users on the system).

22.   Regarding claim 24, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 19, including wherein the step of receiving the status information associated with the account comprises the sub-steps of:

extracting state information from the instruction (Cheng, col. 18, lines 18-35); and

determining whether a user-defined display format is associated with the state information exists (Hayashi, col. 6, lines 15-20 and Fig. 6).

23.   Regarding claim 25, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 24, including responsive to determining that the user-defined display format exists, retrieving

the user-defined display format from the database (Cheng, col. 18, lines 18-35, Cheng teaches users being able to add, delete, and update their information from the database); and

determining whether the user-defined display format is associated with one or more of the tasks and the anomalies (Cheng, col. 18, lines 18-35, Cheng teaches users being able to add, delete, and update project and task information from the database).

24.   Regarding claim 26, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 25, including incorporating the user-defined display format with the tasks and the anomalies in the combined presentation in response to the user-defined display format being associated with the tasks and the anomalies (Cheng,

col. 18, lines 18-35, Cheng teaches that users can modify their displayed personal

information).

25.   Regarding claim 27, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 25, including incorporating a default display format in the

combined presentation responsive to the user-defined display format being un-

associated with the tasks and the anomalies (Cheng, col. 18, lines 18-35, Cheng

teaches that the screens are designed for displaying and updating the information).

26.   Regarding claim 28, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 24, including

        responsive to determining that the user-defined display format does not exist,

retrieving a default display format from a server (Cheng, col. 18, line 29-31); and

extracting the tasks and the anomalies associated with the user from the database

(Cheng, col. 18, lines 18-35).

27.   Regarding claim 29, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 28, including incorporating the tasks and

the anomalies extracted with the default display format in the combined presentation

(Hayashi, Fig 6).

28.   Regarding claim 30, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 16, including wherein the combined presentation

includes at least one form for representing the status information (Hayashi, Fig 6).

29.   Regarding claim 33, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 32, including wherein the information displayed

is selected from a group comprising tasks to be completed, and anomalies that are

incomplete (Hayashi, Fig 6).

30.   Regarding claim 34, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 33, including assigning each of the tasks a serial number

and identifying each of the tasks by the serial number corresponding thereto when the

information is received (Hayashi, col. 18, lines 18-35, Hayashi discloses storing all task

information in a database, in which each field inherently has an identification key).

31.   Regarding claim 35, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 32, including

        selecting an order in which the information is displayed (Cheng, col. 18, lines 30-

35, Cheng teaches that users can modify project and task information).

32.   Regarding claim 36, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 33, including wherein the account is associated with a

user selected from a group comprising users, managers, and administrators (Hayashi,

Fig. 6 and col. 4, lines 30-55, Hayashi teaches a shared environment wherein members

of a group have separate tasks).

33.   Regarding claim 37, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 36, including wherein step of modifying the information

with updates includes a user defining an anomaly associated with the work low

information (Cheng, col. 18, lines 30-35, Cheng teaches that users can modify project

and task information).

34.   Regarding claim 38, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as

claimed, as described in claim 37, including wherein the step of modifying the

information with updates includes a manager assigning at least one of the users the

anomaly for rectification (Cheng, col. 18, lines 30-35, Cheng teaches that users can

modify project and task information).

Claims 10, 22, 23, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Cheng (U.S. Patent Number 6,067,548) in view of Hayashi (U.S.

Patent Number 6,026,365) as applied to claims 2-9 above, and further in view of

obviousness.

35.   Regarding claim 10, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claim 9. Hayashi also teaches a private environment, wherein a user has control of the system (Hayashi, col. 4, lines 10-36). However, Cheng and Hayashi do not explicitly state associating access permission with the parameter by an administrator. It would have been obvious to one in the ordinary skill at the time of the invention to include access permission by an administrator of the system in order to provide a user with control of the group members.

36.   Regarding claims 22, 23, and 31, Cheng and Hayashi disclose the limitations, substantially as claimed, as described in claims 16 and 19. Cheng also discloses only authorized users being able to use the system (col. 18, lines 30-35). Cheng and Hayashi do not explicitly state receiving a user identification number and a password from the instruction, accessing the database to authenticate the user identification number and the password, and responsive to the user identification number and the password being authenticated, enabling access to the account, and generating an error message for display on the client computer responsive to the user identification number and the password being unauthenticated. However, it would have been obvious to one in the ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that an authorized user, as Cheng discloses, would require an identification and password to be considered authorized, for the benefit of having a secure system where only users of the system, and not unauthorized users, have access to add, delete, and update project and task objects and status (Cheng, col. 18, lines 34-36).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

He (U.S. Patent Number 5,944,824) discloses a user authenticated system and method to sign on to a network requiring a user identification and password, which is stored in a database and checked at sign-on.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to J. Bret Dennison whose telephone number is (703)305-8756. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David A Wiley can be reached on (703)308-5221. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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